

The fifteen-year evolution of a transgender treatment program in a Far North Queensland Sexual Health Service: a review of presentation trends

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Background/Purpose:

Changing social attitudes towards gender diversity and increasing awareness of effective gender affirming treatment has led to escalating demand for medical and psychosocial transgender services.

Cairns Sexual Health Service (CSHS) has been providing care for transgender clients for fifteen years and this service has gradually evolved to accommodate the changing demographics of the adolescent and adult transgender population in Far North Queensland. Services provided by CSHS includes medical and psychological assessments, provision of hormone treatment, individual and partner/family counselling and support and psychologist facilitation of peer groups/networks. CSHS also provides links to other government and non-government services including speech pathology (for voice re-training), specialist fertility preservation services, employment support and capacity building through education programs for other service providers and community organisations including schools and workplaces.

Approach:

This study is a review of the client presentation trends over the 15-year period from 2004 to end of 2019. The extended time frame is important and relevant as there were important legal changes that have impacted on service capacity and delivery, particularly in 2013 and in 2017.

Outcomes/Impact:

The review demonstrates the exponential increase in numbers and particular trends related to age and identified gender in client presentations over the 15 years.

Innovation and Significance:

This review will help determine whether the increased demand for transgender healthcare services and trends in client presentations described in the literature is reflected locally. This will also help CSHS proactively plan transgender services to meet client needs.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

No interests to disclose.